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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/810,962	03/16/2001	Atsuo Omaru	09792909-4809	7248
26263	7590	02/02/2006	EXAMINER	
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			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1745	

DATE MAILED: 02/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/810,962	Applicant(s) OMARU ET AL.	
	Examiner Tracy Dove	Art Unit 1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 November 2005.
 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-5 and 15-46 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15-46 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-5 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to the communication filed on 11/21/05. Applicant's arguments have been considered, but are not persuasive. Claims 1, 3-5 and 15-46 are pending with claims 15-46 being withdrawn. This Action is made FINAL.

Claims Analysis

The claimed invention recites the graphite in the negative electrode has a "rhombohedral structure". The specification discloses that natural graphite has a "rhombohedral structure" (page 21) and that natural graphite having a "rhombohedral structure" may be used as a starting material (page 42). Thus, in view of the teaching of the present specification, natural graphite contains a "rhombohedral structure".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claims 1, 3 and 5 contain the added limitation "a ratio (surface area after pressing):(surface area before pressing) of said graphite is greater than 1" which contains new matter. Page 15 of the specification teaches " the specific surface are of the graphite after

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pressing is 2.5 times and below of that before pressing...the change in the specific surface areas before and after pressing is more preferable to be 2 times and below, and most preferable to be 1.6 times and below". Thus, "greater than 1" is clearly not supported by the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 and 3-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hayashi et al., JP 10-334915.

Hayashi teaches a rechargeable battery having an electrode comprising graphite particles. A dynamic energy process is applied to a graphite material so that the apparent density ratio between before and after the process becomes 1.1 or above. The apparent density ratio between before and after the process equals the tap density after the process/tap density before the process, and this is to become the index of sphericity. See abstract.

The intensity ratio R of a Raman spectrum is preferably 0.4 or less. In the Raman spectrum analysis, the intensity IA of peak PA near 1580 cm⁻¹ and the intensity IB of peak PB near 1360 cm⁻¹ were measured (0035). Therefore, $R=IB/IA=H_{sd}/H_{sg}$ and $H_{sg}/H_{sd}=1/R=G_s$. Since R is 0.4 or less, Hayashi teaches G_s is 2.5 or more.

The tap density ratio before and after processing is 1.7 or greater, more preferably 1.1 or greater. It is desirable to have a tap density after processing of 0.5-2 g/cc (see page 4, paragraph 0023-0024). The tap density of the graphite material is preferably in the range of 0.7-1.2 g/cc

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(see page 7, paragraph 0042). The true density of the graphite material is 2.25 g/cc or more (claim 2). Thus a packing characteristic index (tap density/true density) of Hayashi may be 0.53 ($1.2/2.25 = \text{tap density/true density}$).

The specific surface area of the graphite particles after processing (pulverizing) is below $25 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ and more than $0.5 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$, preferably $2\text{-}10 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ (0035). Table 4 shows different graphite material properties before and after a dynamic energy process/treatment. The SA in Table 4 represents surface area with the surface area of the graphite being $19.1 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ before treatment and $8.9 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ after treatment (Example 13). The surface area after treatment is 2.1 times that before treatment. The energy process is specifically pulverization. Hayashi teaches a surface area of the graphite being $4.5 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$, $4.8 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$, $8.7 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ or $19.1 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ before treatment (Table 4) and preferably $2\text{-}10 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ after treatment (0035). Hayashi teaches an electrode having a graphite material with a (d002) distance between layers of 0.34nm or less (claim 2).

Hayashi teaches natural graphite of high orientation/high crystallinity is used (0013-0014). High crystallinity natural graphite is known to have a rhombohedral structure (diamond structure). Hayashi teaches the natural graphite may be subjected to a surface grinding process (0029). Natural graphite has a rhombohedral structure (as stated in the present specification, see above).

Hayashi does not explicitly recite the graphite material has at least two peaks on a differential thermogravimetric curve. However, the graphite material of Hayashi inherently has at least two peaks on a differential thermogravimetric curve because the graphite material of Hayashi has a Raman spectrum having two distinct signal peaks. The two distinct signal peaks on the Raman spectrum indicate the graphite material contains two distinct carbon materials. A

graphite material having two distinct carbon materials would inherently provide at least two peaks on a differential thermogravimetric curve.

Thus the claims are anticipated.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 11/21/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding the 35 U.S.C. 112, 1st paragraph, rejection, Applicant argues the examples in the present specification disclose a ratio greater than 1. However, the entire ratio range recited by the claimed invention must be supported by the specification as filed. For example a ratio of 5 is greater than 1, but not supported by the examples of the specification.

Applicant argues Hayashi does not disclose the ratio of the claimed invention. (*Note claim 4 does not recite any "ratio" limitation.*) However, Hayashi teaches a rechargeable battery having an electrode comprising graphite particles. A dynamic energy process is applied to a graphite material so that the apparent density ratio between before and after the process becomes 1.1 or above. The apparent density ratio between before and after the process equals the tap density after the process/tap density before the process, and this is to become the index of sphericity. See abstract. Furthermore, Hayashi teaches the specific surface area of the graphite particles after processing (pulverizing) is below 25 m²/g and more than 0.5 m²/g, preferably 2-10 m²/g (0035). Table 4 shows different graphite material properties before and after a dynamic energy process/treatment. The SA in Table 4 represents surface area with the surface area of the graphite being 19.1 m²/g before treatment and 8.9 m²/g after treatment (Example 13). The surface area after treatment is 2.1 times that before treatment. The energy process is specifically

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pulverization. Hayashi teaches a surface area of the graphite being $4.5 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$, $4.8 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$, $8.7 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ or $19.1 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ before treatment (Table 4) and preferably $2\text{-}10 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ after treatment (0035).

Hayashi is not limited to any particular embodiment.

The claim limitation “a ratio greater than 1” is considered new matter. The instant specification states the ratio is “most preferable to be 1.6 times and below”. See new matter rejection above.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tracy Dove whose telephone number is 571-272-1285. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (9:00-7:30).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Pat Ryan can be reached on 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



TRACY DOVE
PRIMARY EXAMINER

January 27, 2006